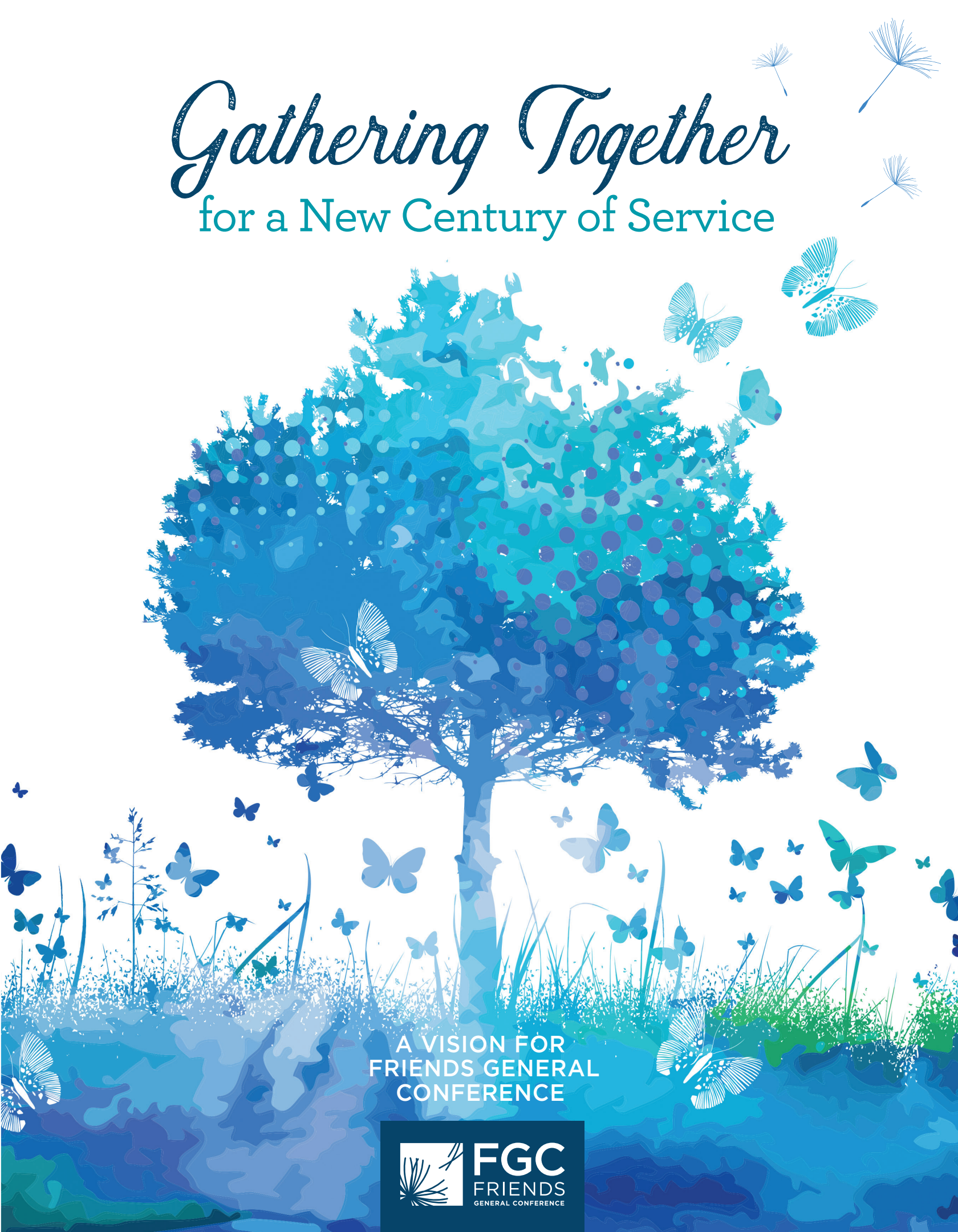


Gathering Together for a New Century of Service



A VISION FOR
FRIENDS GENERAL
CONFERENCE



FGC
FRIENDS
GENERAL CONFERENCE

Photos: Clockwise from upper left: 1. Marta Rusek, 2. (no credit), 3. Christian Hayden, 4. Mike Goren, 5. Christian Hayden, 6. Christian Hayden

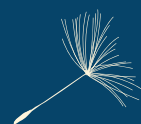
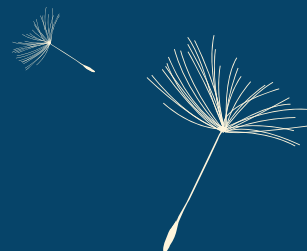


MISSION

FGC, with divine guidance, nurtures the spiritual vitality of the Religious Society of Friends by providing programs and services for Friends (Quakers), meetings, and seekers.

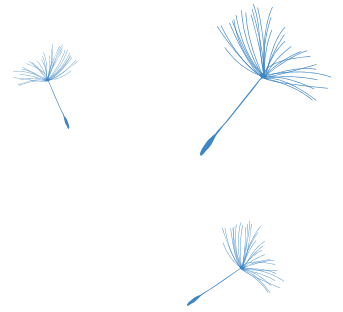
VISION

We envision a vital and growing Religious Society of Friends – a faith that deepens spiritually, welcomes newcomers, builds a supportive and inclusive community, and provides loving service and witness in the world.



Gathering Together

Priorities



The FGC governing bodies, Central and Executive Committee, include representatives from each FGC directly-affiliated yearly or monthly meeting. These committees worked diligently for two years, listening to Friends through the U.S. and Canada to discern the greatest needs among FGC Quakers today.

The 5 organizational priorities established are:

1. Nurturing spiritual vitality: **The FGC Gathering**
2. Moving toward wholeness: **The Ministry on Racism**
3. Supporting Meetings: **Connecting & Communicating**
4. Empowering multigenerational community and leadership: **Young Adult & Youth Ministries**
5. Feeding spiritual hunger: **Religious Education & Spiritual Deepening**

FGC seeks to create an endowment for the Gathering while increasing funding for all priorities to facilitate the vitality and growth of the Religious Society of Friends.



Photo: Caroline Wildflower



Photo: Mike Goren

Uniquely Positioned to Serve

For more than a century, FGC has been the primary organization connecting unprogrammed Friends meetings across North America. FGC is uniquely positioned to provide programs and services that continue to nurture the spiritual lives of Quaker meetings and churches, and individual Friends.

Conferences and Consultations

- FGC Annual Gathering
- Retreats for Friends of Color, youth and young adults
- Partnership with White Privilege Conference
- Clerks consultations and young clerks training
- Christian and Interfaith Relations Committee

Religious Education

- Spiritual Deepening eRetreats
- Spiritual Deepening Library for Adults and Children
- QuakerBooks and Quaker Press
- Sparkling Still for children
- Promotional Partnerships with Faith & Play Stories and Friends Couple Enrichment

Services and Initiatives for and on behalf of Meetings

- Friends Meeting House Fund (FMHF)
- Outreach resources
- Representing FGC Friends at the World Council of Churches
- Institutional Assessment on Systemic Racism
- Anti-racism training
- Quaker Cloud website service
- Welcoming Friend Project
- QuakerFinder.org



Highlights from Collaborative Initiatives

FGC serves close to **35,000** Friends, most of whom are members or attenders of the **16** yearly meetings and **11** monthly meetings directly affiliated with FGC. Since its inception in 1900, the number of affiliate yearly meetings has more than doubled and membership continues to grow. FGC now includes meetings in 56 states and provinces in the U.S., Canada and Mexico.

Partnership with yearly and monthly meetings is key to developing and implementing the programs Friends request.

For example:

- Recently, FGC's **Youth Programs** collaborated with multiple yearly meetings to organize online youth retreats for Friends across North America. These events were meaningful opportunities for youth to connect with each other during a time of great isolation due to the Covid-19 pandemic. They also created a network of Quaker youth workers who felt supported by a larger community of colleagues. As one of the co-organizers of the December event shared, "It's another world to collaborate with so many staff people. At no point did I feel alone in the programming, as I often do as the only youth worker in my yearly meeting."
- FGC's **Spiritual Deepening Program** collaborated with New York Yearly Meeting's Aging Resources, Consultation, and Help (ARCH) Program to develop two new eRetreats: *Aging, Death, and Dying* and *Building a Meaningful and Connected Life*. Content from these retreats is being added to the Spiritual Deepening Library. ARCH provided expertise and collaborated to adapt their materials and activities. FGC publicized the ARCH materials and website helping ARCH meet their goal of reaching a wider audience.
- During the 2016 Gathering, Friends of Color, in partnership with Friends of European descent, asked FGC to undertake an **assessment to address systemic racism**, and 10 monthly meetings and 3 yearly meetings wrote minutes in support. FGC has now completed the Institutional Assessment and is sharing the experience and learnings with yearly and monthly meetings. A committee of Friends from 7 yearly meetings is working to guide FGC through the process of implementing the recommendations from the Assessment.



1. Nurturing spiritual vitality: THE FGC GATHERING

Need: For more than 100 years, the FGC Gathering has brought together Friends from meetings across the US, Canada and beyond for a powerful week of worship, workshops, and fellowship. The Gathering has grown and changed over time and continues to play a central role in the spiritual revitalization among FGC Friends.

The Gathering connects and supports all FGC ministries, including the priorities of this campaign. The Ministry on Racism and Young Adult and Youth Ministries strengthen the communities they serve at the Gathering. Spiritual Deepening programs reach new audiences. Opportunities abound to foster connections between yearly meetings. The Gathering provides these opportunities for a wide range of Quaker organizations, as well.

These enriching experiences grow stronger as Gathering attendance increases. Friends exposed to new ideas and transformative connections take these experiences home with them, strengthening and deepening their local meetings.

Recently, attendance has been declining. FGC conducted a market research study that over 2,000 Friends participated in and the answer was clear: FGC must lower the cost to make Gathering more accessible.

Goal: Ensure long-term vitality of the FGC Gathering.

Strategy: • Create a significant Conferences endowment to lower costs and grow attendance.
• Increase attendance to 1,100+ (30% increase), with a focus on youth, young adults, and families.

Photo: Marta Rusek



“The Gathering is a gift to me and my children. It makes me want to give [that gift] to other people’s children.”
The Gathering offers people a chance to “take risks in sharing. They feel vulnerable, and from that place, form deep and powerful friendships. Children watch how adults interact during the week, and seeing adults in a loving space sets an example.”

– Ida Trisolini
Piedmont Friends Fellowship
and Yearly Meeting



Anne Pomeroy of New York Yearly Meeting has been attending Gathering since 2004 and shares the impact FGC's youth programming has had on her family, calling it a lifeline for young people. "The relationships youth develop there will be with them long into the future—something I want my children to have for whatever the days ahead may hold. FGC saves the lives of some of our children."

Photo: Christian Hayden



Photo: Caroline Wildflower



Photo: Mike Goren

Serving as a co-clerk for the 2017 FGC Gathering changed my life. Manifestations of racism, long experienced by Friends of Color, broke into the consciousness of me and other Quakers of European descent and I experienced Spirit speaking to me with the words, "It's time." I knew it was time to address my own racism and the community needed the co-clerks for the next year to walk the anti-racism path. There were people in the FGC community with experience and the desire to help. We listened, learned, spoke, stumbled, stood up, and grew. My life is richer and has more meaning for having started that journey with FGC. That experience became excellent training as I moved into my new role as General Secretary for New York Yearly Meeting.

– Steve Mohlke,
General Secretary of New York Yearly Meeting

2. Moving toward wholeness: THE MINISTRY ON RACISM

Need: For over 20 years, Friends General Conference has been evolving to transform into an actively anti-racist organization. All Friends will benefit as Quaker meetings, churches and individuals gain a fuller understanding of Spirit as we work together toward equity.

FGC completed an Institutional Assessment on Systemic Racism in 2018. Responses came from almost 1,200 Friends and 17 focus groups with participants from 21 yearly meetings. It showed that FGC seeks to welcome Friends of Color. However, white/European-American Friends often fail to recognize that Friends of Color have been uncomfortable at FGC Gatherings and the words and actions of white Friends continue to harm them.

We need spirit-led interventions to transform into an anti-racist community. To that end, FGC is:

1. Asking, for each decision it makes, “How does this decision support FGC in its goal to transform into an actively anti-racist faith community?”
2. Being guided by an Institutional Assessment Implementation Committee (IAIC).
3. Increasing support and resources for the Ministry on Racism Program to further support monthly and yearly meetings.
4. Making changes to its organizational structure and practices. For example, FGC committees are actively discussing:
 - the possibility of providing stipends to create more equity and access to opportunities within FGC.
 - the question of reparations and supporting deep learning and discernment about it in the FGC community.

Goal: Move FGC toward greater wholeness as a spiritual community as we transform into an actively anti-racist faith community.

Strategy:

- Increase direct support for Friends of Color to participate in FGC programs and serve in leadership positions.
- Create and train a team of volunteers to raise awareness of the existence and effects of systemic racism and white supremacy among FGC Friends.
- Increase staff capacity to support these efforts.



“Ministry on Racism helps me stay Quaker. It gives me an opportunity to see other people like me. No matter the background, everyone needs to see someone like them. People are focused now on divisions, but the Ministry on Racism keeps working to unite us. It is for all Friends to help us live into our shared values of peace, integrity, community, and equality.”

– S. Lupe Guinier
Morningside Friends Meeting in New York



3. Supporting Meetings: **CONNECTING & COMMUNICATING**

Need: Friends look to FGC to connect across monthly and yearly meetings and access the rich network of resources, people, and experiences. Meetings, whether large or small, have something to share and something to learn from others experiencing similar issues. Friends need one another to grow and fulfill our potential as a religious society and individuals of faith. By serving as a hub of communications, resources and connections between meetings and Friends, FGC can facilitate this growth.

Goal: Enhance our ability to connect Friends and serve yearly and monthly meetings.

Strategy:

- Re-design the FGC website to make vital information easier to find and add a directory of traveling ministers and other resources.
- Increase capacity with an additional full-time communications staff person.
- Increase volunteer training, travel funds, and staff time for the Yearly Meeting Visitors Program to better meet the needs of FGC-affiliated yearly meetings.

“As newbie Yearly Meeting clerks, sometimes we struggle with a thorny issue that is relatively new to our yearly meeting, and there is little or no guidance in our minutes or Faith and Practice. We have found FGC’s quarterly calls for clerks to be by far our best source of insight, experience, support and good ideas for clerking. We LOVE that we can ask a question and get ten responses! We can count on getting practical new ideas, unexpected perspectives, and collective wisdom from a number of more experienced clerks. This informal “share shop” has immeasurably strengthened our work as co-clerks and helps Northern Yearly Meeting deepen its Quaker practice. ”

– Kat Griffith and Becky Marty
Northern Yearly Meeting

Photo: Mike Goren



Photo: John Margerum



4. Empowering multigenerational community and leadership: YOUNG ADULT & YOUTH MINISTRIES

Need: Building a truly multigenerational community of Friends based in love and mutual respect will profoundly nourish and invigorate the Religious Society of Friends. A community that supports authentic relationships across ages will increase opportunities to realize the divine in our lives, individually and corporately.

Goal: **Strengthen opportunities for Quaker youth and young adults to participate in and contribute to Quaker community.**

Strategy:

- Collaborate with yearly meetings to support young adults and youth to participate in and contribute to all facets of Quaker community.
- Pilot a multigenerational spiritual friendship program.
- Provide programming and structure to strengthen Quaker leadership and ministry of younger Friends.
- Develop methods to help younger Friends, including those who may lack strong ties to a monthly meeting, connect to Quaker community.



Photo: Mike Goren

“It’s hard to imagine my life without FGC! I attended my first Gathering when I was four years old. Having a community of Quaker kids is so important growing up. The relationships I made through the High School Program are among the most supportive I have today. These are the F/friends who know me in the most deeply personal and spiritual way. And I am not alone in this experience, hundreds of youth and young adults find what it truly means to be Quaker through these youth and Adult Young Friend programs.”

– Ellie Greenler
Northern Yearly Meeting

5. Feeding spiritual hunger: RELIGIOUS EDUCATION & SPIRITUAL DEEPENING

Need: Religious Education has been at the core of FGC’s mission since the beginning. Friends continue to yearn for spiritual depth and the transformative power of meeting for worship. They want to rediscover the power early Friends experienced in a way that is relevant to their lives today.

While many Quaker meetings experience the deep presence of Spirit, Friends and meetings continually seek the opportunity to deepen our faith and practice further. Smaller yearly meetings, in particular, seek resources for spiritual enrichment they could not create on their own. We are called to nurture this desire for spiritual deepening and can do so by strengthening current initiatives.

The Spiritual Deepening Library offers collections of readings, videos, and activities for individuals and groups of all ages. FGC is prepared to increase staffing on a short-term basis to expand the current success of this program.

Goal: **Improve and increase resources to help yearly and monthly meetings feed the spiritual hunger of Friends.**

Strategy: • Increase and strengthen eRetreats and other learning opportunities that explore aspects of Quaker faith and practice.

- Greatly expand the resources shared in the Spiritual Deepening Library.
- Increase promotion and accessibility of eRetreats, Spiritual Deepening Library, and other Religious Education resources.

Kathy R., a seeker in Indiana recently attended the “Silence and Light” eRetreat for newcomers. “I loved the opportunity to learn and connect. It really had a big impact on me and made me want to continue exploring what it means to be a Quaker... [I] loved the modules, readings, and the opportunity for online discussion... I am glad that I can go back and read/learn as I plan to re-review everything and continue to learn and grow.”



Photo: Colby Abazs



Photo: Seth Barch

Celebrating a Century of Service

1900-1950

Friends pool vision, resources and courage to organize FGC

- Biennial conferences are held
- Programs and first-day school curricula are developed
- Visits to new meetings and isolated Friends encourage growth and spiritual renewal
- FGC is a founding member of World Council of Churches

1950-2000

New visions for the Gathering and new programs

- Annual Gatherings
- Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. speaks (1958)
- Gathering draws 2,300 attendees (1994)
- FGCQuaker.org website
- Travelling ministries program
- Young Quakes Conferences

Early 2000s

Exploration of new programs and discernment of priorities

- Committee for Ministry on Racism
- QuakerFinder.org
- Quaker Quest
- Spiritual Deepening program
- Institutional Assessment on Racism
- Expanded reach to Western Friends

2020s

A sustainable long-term vision of service

Endowed Gathering provides for larger attendance, including more children

Our Impact

FGC adapts to serve the rapidly changing needs of Friends during a global pandemic

- First virtual Gathering is held, making the FGC Gathering accessible to more friends.
- Ministry on Racism programming expands to meet Friends' needs during the pandemic.
- The number of Spiritual Deepening eRetreats more than doubles.
- Youth Ministries expands beyond the gathering, offering more events for youth year-round.
- Quarterly clerks calls offer vital peer support and connections during a time of great change for yearly meetings.

“FGC brings Friends from across our continent together giving us two simultaneous and complementary opportunities. One is to understand that wherever we walk there is a community of Quakers accompanying us. Another is to broaden our view of the path beyond that which our own experience shows us. Our faith asks us to live each moment from the space of heart-relationship with the Divine and the FGC Gathering helps us do that.”

Christie Duncan-Tessmer
General Secretary
of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting

FGC 2020 SNAPSHOT

13.5 staff
(full-time equivalent)

350+
volunteers

\$1.5M
total operating budget

THE GATHERING

1,008
total participants

290
first-time attendees

MINISTRY ON RACISM

119
Friends of Color participated in ongoing worship and retreats

115
Friends of European Descent participated in worship on confronting racism

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION & SPIRITUAL DEEPENING

275
eRetreat participants

3,086
Spiritual Deepening Library visitors

YOUNG ADULT AND YOUTH MINISTRIES

143
High School and Young Adult Friends at Gathering

12
Youth/Young Adults trained as clerks*
* in 2021

CONNECTING AND COMMUNICATING

12,250
Newsletter subscribers

70,500
visitors to QuakerFinder.org

Investing in Gathering Together

Gathering Together Campaign Goals

Program Support

Making Gathering Accessible to All	\$1,100,000
Gathering/Conferences Endowment	1,000,000
Short-Term Funding*	100,000
Strengthening & Expanding Programs and Services*	\$1,100,000
Ministry on Racism	400,000
Connecting and Communicating	300,000
Young Adult and Youth Ministries	300,000
Religious Education and Spiritual Deepening	100,000
Campaign Expenses	\$200,000
Total Campaign Goal	\$2,400,000

* To be expended over a 2-5 year period.

FGC currently has \$4.8 million in endowment and reserves. Each year, earnings from the endowment and draws from the reserves help support FGC’s programming and operations.

Additional Goals of the Campaign

- Annual Fund Growth**
Strengthen the Annual Fund - annual increase of individual giving by 5%
- Planned and Deferred Giving**
150 Friends who will remember FGC in their will or estate plan
- Increased awareness of and engagement in the mission and programs of FGC**
Growth in the number and diversity of volunteers and program participants



“FGC provides tangible, concrete, crucial help to us in Alaska, and welcomes the support and help that we, in turn, give back. We are so grateful.”

Jan Bronson
Presiding Clerk of Alaska Friends Conference

Sample Scale of Giving

Scale of Giving typically necessary to raise \$2,400,000

Number of Gifts	Gift Range	Gift Totals
2	\$250,000	\$500,000
4	100,000	400,000
8	50,000	400,000
14	25,000	350,000
20	10,000	200,000
30	5,000	150,000
50	3,000	150,000
many	below 3,000	250,000
		\$2,400,000

Gifts to the **Gathering Together** campaign could include:

- Cash and pledges payable over a 3 – 5 year period
- Gifts of securities or other appreciated property
- Bequests or other planned gifts received during the campaign

Ensuring Good Use of Endowments

We know that endowments can sometimes outlive their purpose. With that in mind, the following language will be appended to the endowment proposed in this campaign:

In the event it becomes unnecessary, undesirable, impractical or impossible to utilize the Fund for such purposes, FGC shall have the right to utilize the Fund for such other programmatic purposes as it deems appropriate.

Paul Kriese from Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting was a long-time Friend who deeply loved his faith community. He served as a volunteer for many years and pledged half of his estate to FGC. Before Paul passed away he shared his thoughts on leaving a legacy for FGC. **“FGC is not just an organization; it is my religious home.”**

Paul referred to philanthropy as a **“ministry of responsibility.”** It is a ministry that inspired him: **“FGC reminds me to be a better person, to use what I have for others.”**

He saw the tie between philanthropy and Quaker faith and practice: **“I was given a gift of making a living,”** he said smiling, **“and it is my responsibility to share—to honor God’s gift of ability.”**

We are deeply grateful for the opportunity to have known Paul and for the many ways he blessed FGC with his presence, service, passion, and generous support.



2021 Executive Committee representatives:

Yearly Meeting Representatives

Alaska Friends Conference
David Bantz

Baltimore Yearly Meeting
Patsy Arnold Martin

Canadian Yearly Meeting
Anne-Marie Zilliacus

Illinois Yearly Meeting of Friends
Janice Domanik

Intermountain Yearly Meeting
Regina Renee Ward

Lake Erie Yearly Meeting
Sally Weaver Sommer

New England Yearly Meeting
Chelle Riendeau

New York Yearly Meeting
Jill Nanfeldt

Northern Yearly Meeting
John Greenler

Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting
Martha Viehmann (ex officio)

Pacific Yearly Meeting
Don Kewman

Philadelphia Yearly Meeting
Keith Barch

Piedmont Friends Fellowship &
Yearly Meeting
Paul Klever

South Central Yearly Meeting
Mary Hampton

Southeastern Yearly Meeting
Susan Wade

Southern Appalachian Yearly
Meeting & Association
Kit Potter

At Large Representatives

Chad Gilmartin
New York Yearly Meeting

Anthony Stover
Philadelphia Yearly Meeting

Robyn Josephs
Southern Appalachian Yearly
Meeting & Association

J. Lee Cook
North Pacific Yearly Meeting

Central Committee Officers 2020

Presiding Clerk

Marvin Barnes
Lake Erie Yearly Meeting

Assistant Clerk/Rising Clerk

Katrina McQuail
Canadian Yearly Meeting

Recording Clerk

Rebecca Haines Rosenberg
Baltimore Yearly Meeting

Assistant Recording Clerk

Mathilda Navias
Lake Erie Yearly Meeting

Treasurer

Joan Sampieri
Lake Erie Yearly Meeting

Assistant Treasurer

Cari Burke Kolehmainen
Lake Erie Yearly Meeting

Gathering Together Campaign Committee co-clerks

Jean-Marie Prestwidge Barch
Philadelphia Yearly Meeting

Ellie Greenler
Northern Yearly Meeting

Ken Stockbridge
Baltimore Yearly Meeting

WWW.FGCQUAKER.ORG/GATHERING-TOGETHER

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